1: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1938 AV7 Burusho AV7

a miserable ten—none of your 'some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold'—while lucerne only gives three crops. 243

'The Hunzukuts' main food is bread, of which the housewife makes a large variety, from the leavened wheatened cake with butter for feast days, the unleavened flapjack of wheat, barley or blended flours for everyday, to the bitter buckwheat scones of leaner times. Milk is not an article of diet; the animals yield little at the best and none at all when their own offspring is weaned. Such milk as there is contains little fat content, which is not to be wondered at in view of the food on which the animals exist; it is converted into butter, curds and such preservable forms. Butter is stored in birch-bark wrappings beneath an adjacent water-channel and broached only on festive occasions or for the entertainment of a guest. Meat is tasted at most twice or three times a year, at festivals or on some day of domestic rejoicing, a wedding or a birth, and then it will be 'some tainted wether of the flock, meetest for death' who supplies the sacrifice. 262 234

The womenfolk tend small vegetable plots in the corner of a field or separate garden, where carrots, turnips, marrows, gourds and half a hundred kinds of humble 'greens' are grown, and a few plants whose leaves or seeds are esteemed for flavouring, along with a few tobacco plants for the men's pipes. After grain and greens, the essential item of Hunza diet is the apricot, fresh in the early summer and dried during the rest of the year; mulberries, fresh and dried, come next in importance, then a few apples, pears and peaches (these little valued because they will neither keep nor dry) and a few grapes for such relatively well-to-do houses as can afford space and water to grow them. Grapes ripen too late to be dried into raisins and the small quantity not consumed fresh is converted into light wine, brightening the winter days for those who have it, and drunk within a couple of months of manufacture. The apricot has yet further uses. Its kernel yields the oil which lights very modestly the winter nights. The Burusho woman is said to refuse, most wisely, to live above the level of the ripe apricot (say 9–10,000 feet). This is, I suspect only a base pretext of her husband's for refusing to live at these altitudes himself. Be that as it may, the upper villages of Hunza are almost exclusively inhabited by immigrants from Wakhan accustomed to a treeless existence and a diet of barley only. Grafting fruit trees is an art thoroughly understood. The above-mentioned fruits supply the only sugar which the Hunza people know. 244 262 245 [273] [354] 361 245

Despite all diligence in tilling the ungrateful soil, despite the utmost 262

countryside was a hive of industry. We missed the larger animals and learnt that they had already been taken up to the *tér* for the summer, while the tiny lambs and kids who were being carefully shepherded about to get what scanty grazing they could find without trespassing into the springing crops, demanded the unceasing vigilance of their small guardians. 233 241

The most noticeable new phenomenon was the constant stream of people, men or women, stooping under huge bundles of greenery till they looked in truth "like trees walking." We had come back to find the poplars well clothed and bushy (for poplars), giving an unwonted air of luxury to the landscape, but now they were being ruthlessly stripped to provide fodder for the animals, half starved throughout the winter on a diet of dry leaves. Poplar, willow, and *ginddwer* are all laid under contribution, but the new fodder has to be very carefully issued at first lest the poor beasts should perish of its unaccustomed succulence. I stood one day watching and photographing a minute human insect at the top of a 50 or 60 foot poplar skilfully stripping it of its spring glory and leaving only the tiniest green tuft at the top. A whole handsome row were about to be similarly shorn. In a moment of thoughtlessness I said to the peasant at my side: "They look so lovely, it does seem a pity. . . ." He turned on me almost fiercely: "What, Mother? Would you starve our beasts for the sake of a poplar tree? The leaves will come again next spring. There is no cure for a dead sheep." I stood rebuked. 137 233

No. 3 had been laying out a new vegetable plot. Apicho showed me the various beds ready for beans, scarlet runners (which here have yellow flowers), marrows, and greens, but confessed that manure was their great problem. They have only one cow, poor devils, and with the best will in the world one cow cannot produce enough. 244 233

The end of May is the season when new saplings of poplar, willow, etc., are planted, and we occasionally met people carrying off bundles of them to set in place. The mills were in action again, and such fortunate folk as had a little grain still left from their emergency store—not, after all, exhausted by weddings or funerals—were carrying pathetically small bags of 245 252

it to be ground.

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

CHAPTER 35

The Hunzan Economy

243 From The thrice-told tales of people who write about Hunza and its fertile fields, one might rightfully expect to see bountiful crops of grain bending in the breeze, but I did not expect to see great expanses of waving golden wheat fields in Hunza, so I was not disappointed. The flight from Pindi to Gilgit told me the story better than words. The harsh, flint rock mountains and meager valleys made agriculture a serious, unrelenting affair that taxed man's ingenuity and endurance.

In field crops the Hunzans grow wheat, which I found to be one of their most important foods. I saw more wheat than any other grain. Then there were [244] buckwheat, peas, broad beans, lucerne, millet, barley, rice, onions, potatoes, carrots, turnips and lettuce.

It is said that they can grow two crops a year and, while I did not actually see two crops produced, I noticed that the wheat was harvested in late July and

that may exist or be created in an agricultural community, no seed is available, the Mir has been known to procure supplies from neighboring states and supply his people with sufficient planting stock.

While through the entire East cow dung and yak dung are used for fuel, in Hunza this is positively not true. The Hunzans are too intelligent to use the mainstay of their lives for fuel. Once it is burned it is gone; but if it is put back into the land, it is there to produce crops for another year. They show their intelligence, if proof of their intelligence is needed, by this one sound principle of self-survival in their means of agriculture.

However, in the more northerly sections of Hunza, closer to the Chinese border, they do use yak dung for fires because of the almost total lack of wood or other types of fuel. They just have to keep themselves warm during the winter.

Here is a list of the vegetables grown in Hunza—potatoes, turnips, carrots, beans, peas, lettuce, pumpkins, tomatoes, melons, watermelons, radishes, onions, cabbage, spinach, cauliflower.

In fruits there are mulberries, apricots, apples, pears, peaches, grapes, walnuts, almonds, a few plums and some cherries.

Grapes are grown fairly extensively because they can plant them against most any wall, as long as they have a bit of soil in which to gain a foothold for their roots. From these grapes they make their Hunzan wine.

They grow a few strawberries, but I could find no currants, gooseberries, raspberries—nor did they know what raspberries were.

The grains grown in Hunza, starting from the most important, are wheat, barley, rye, millet, buckwheat and a small quantity of rice. Some alfalfa is grown as a forage crop.